

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 1 of the Specification as follows:

Fig. 2 is a block diagram illustrating a router embodiment 50 that includes M multiple dedicated multicast cards 16-1 through 16- M and 18-1 through 18- M . Switch fabric 12 is partitioned into m multiple subplanes, for example subplanes 12-1 through 12-3, thus supporting m multiple simultaneous switching paths, for example switching paths 106-1 through 106- m , 112-1 through 112- m , and 116-1 through 116- m . In a folded router geometry, multicast cards 16-1 and 18-1, and connecting data loop 108-1 occupy a single circuit card. Similarly multicast cards 16- M and 18- M and connecting data loop 108- M occupy a single circuit card. In the example of Fig. 2, a multicast packet is sent by input line card 14 simultaneously through parallel switching paths 106-1 through 106- m across switch fabric 12 to M dedicated multicast cards 16-1, 18-1 through 16- M , 18- M , where the packet is replicated at each multicast card and then sent in m parallel replica packets from each dedicated multicast card 16-1, 18-1 through 16- M , 18- M through simultaneous switching paths 112-1 through 112- m and 116-1 through 116- m respectively across switch fabric 12 to N destination line cards 20-1 through 20- N . This multiple replication provides a one-to- N an N -to-one multicast tree expansion. If two dedicated multicast cards 16- M , 18- M can each send three replica packets, then three replicas multiplied by two multicast cards would provide one-to-six six-to-one multicast tree expansion. This procedure improves the fan out and reduces the time delay, since more data is multicast within a single switch cycle.